

## **Lincoln Co. ATC Wood Technology Students Engage in Real World Project That Will Be Showcased in Middle School**

In Sonja Baker's wood technology program at the Lincoln Co. ATC there are always outstanding projects being created, built and displayed. This year's project is to build a massive 44' red oak trophy case for the Lincoln Co. Middle School. The total construction consists of 11 units measuring 4' wide by 8' tall. There will be at least two and maybe three shelves per each unit. The bottom half of the unit has two doors designed to hide a storage area.

"I kind of looked at what was already in place at the middle school and came back to my classroom to talk over the project with my students so they could design something similar," says Sonja. "Last year, this project was kind of like a brain child. The middle school principal gathered some estimates from outside sources. The cost was beyond what the budget would allow. So, she asked me if I would be interested in building this type of furniture in my classroom. At first, I was a little reluctant; however, breaking it down into the eleven units made the project much easier for my students to handle."



**This is a great work based learning project because it provides students with an opportunity to work through each stage of the process. Sonja details the following five stages:**

**Stage one – “We drew up the blueprints in our technical drawing class. This provided my students with an opportunity to learn how to use drafting equipment.”**

**Stage two – “We made a list of materials and ordered what we needed for the project. This mirrored what would take place in a real world project.”**

**Stage three – “The cabinet making class began to cut and assemble each unit. It took us two weeks to get all the doors made. This was quite a project because each door is made of solid wood instead of plywood. I was proud of the craftsmanship during this stage of the project.”**

**Stage four – “Now that we offer a wood finishing class, we have been able to further refine the project by sanding down the wood. Once that process is complete, the students can then begin staining the units.”**

**Stage five – “The last stage of work to be conducted inside my classroom will be to put a top coat of clear finish on each unit. It’s a finishing touch and one that will provide durability for the units.”**

**Final Stage – “The final stage of the project will be to install the 11 units in the middle school. We have had approximately 40-50 students working on this project since school began in August. I’m pleased at how much these students have progressed and how much they have learned. I know they will always be proud of the fact that they participated in a project that will have a lasting effect by being on display.”**



**Photo at left: Senior Tiffany Miracle is sanding one of the units.**

**“I think this class is fun and I have enjoyed learning how to use all the tools,” says Tiffany. “In future years, I can look back and say that I was part of making that case. It’s awesome.”**

**“I’ve had a blast,” says Junior Eddy Baker. “This has been the best class I’ve had in this school.”**

**“I enjoy this class and get to play a role in what students can do when they come over here,” says Senior Brandon Brock. “In later years, I’ll be able to show my own kids what I helped build because the trophy case will be here long after I graduate.”**

**“I like this class because you get to make stuff,” says Sophomore Ethan Wilson.**

**“Teaching makes me feel good. It’s nice to know that I’m making a difference in someone’s life – maybe helping him or her with future decisions,” says Sonja.**



**“The KY SkillsUSA organization is a lot of fun and I know it teaches the students good leadership skills. I have seen some of my students prosper with this program and they see the light. By seeing they can be a leader, they realize they don’t have to follow others. It has made a real difference in how they look at themselves.”**

**The 11- unit trophy case will be completed over this school year and has had a positive impact on the students working on this project. It’s something**

**that will stand out and have its own place of prominence in the Lincoln Co. Middle School as well as in the hearts and minds of those who constructed the impressive trophy case -- and it was built entirely by Lincoln Co. ATC wood technology students.**

**“We are extremely proud of Sonja Baker’s efforts in this worthwhile project. She has worked hard to ensure that all facets of the curriculum have been covered and at the same time provided these students with an opportunity to learn about project management,” says Lincoln Co. ATC Principal Richard Kazsuk. “The students have done an excellent job and the work ethic displayed throughout the project has been exemplary.”**

**Sonja has also been successful in helping to place her students in some of the area’s local cabinet shops. By working with personnel in the industry, she believes it helps each of her students as well as providing the local industry with trained employees. It’s a win-win situation for everyone.**

**Ethan Wilson and Brandon Brock putting a clear finish on the door of a unit.**

